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SOUTH CAROLINA DURING THE NULLIFICATION STRUGGLE.

TO understand the state of public sentiment in South Carolina at the time of the nullification struggle, it is necessary to go back more than sixty years and to appreciate conditions of society which have long since passed away. But even at that time, South Carolina was peculiarly old-fashioned, as compared with the rest of the country. A responsive chord in the breast of its dominant class was struck by the high-flown, romantic chivalry of Sir Walter Scott's works, and we find the newspapers of the time filled with their praises. Duelling, a practice which the North had never very generally tolerated, might almost be said to have been an institution of South Carolina. The admiration of the people for physical bravery was extreme, and, especially among the younger men, it led to a reckless contempt of danger, often amounting to foolhardiness. Like the barons of old, the governing class scorned all vulgar occupation; the public service or a professional career or the superintendency of a large landed estate was the only vocation worthy of their powers. As a natural accompaniment to this semi-barbaric life, went an extreme local pride, which was perhaps the Carolinian's strongest characteristic. The boy in Charleston who was asked what his country was, answered "South Carolina," not because he had been taught a defiance or dislike of the United States, but simply because his knowledge of his country did not extend beyond a knowledge of his state. Not only the state but also, in a less degree, each particular portion of it was the object of this devotion. A citizen was wont to boast first of being a Carolinian, and after that of coming from the Colleton or the Pendleton or the Greenville district, as the case might be. Yet, at the time when this sentiment had reached its culminating point in the nullification of a law of the

United States, there was a strong party, many of whose members were men of the first rank, who, while they yielded to none in their devotion to South Carolina and were wedded to her by the strongest ties, nevertheless acknowledged a sovereign superior to her and claiming a higher allegiance.

The spirit of nullification was in America when the federal government was formed. It found an important expression in the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions in 1798, and again in the Hartford Convention in 1814. The beginning of the active agitation which subsequently led to the practical demonstration of the principle in South Carolina dates from 1822-23. The protective tariff bill introduced in the national House of Representatives at that time by Mr. Todd, chairman of the committee on manufactures, excited much comment and almost universal hostility among the people of South Carolina. They regarded it as class legislation — as the taxing of one portion of the people for the benefit of another portion — and they opposed it accordingly. The opposition was thus based principally upon economic grounds, but the constitutionality of the pending bill was generally denied.

The first important move against the Todd bill was made in January, 1824, at a public meeting held in Charleston, when a formal remonstrance against its passage was put forth. This remonstrance was drawn up by a committee of four, two of whom, at least, William Drayton and Hugh Legaré, were firm supporters of the Union ; but, while it was generally indorsed by public meetings in other parts of the state, the conservative constitutional views it enunciated were probably not concurred in by a majority of the people, although its economic and Union sentiments unquestionably received more widespread approval. It began by a recital of the alarm with which the people of the state had witnessed the efforts of the general government to levy duties on imports, for the purpose of protecting domestic industries. The people of South Carolina regarded such duties as calculated to injure the agricultural states, and they deprecated the violent diversion of capital from natural into artificial channels. Attention was called to the decline in

the prosperity of the state since the passage of the last tariff act, and it was solemnly declared that the bill then before Congress not only was unjust in its provisions, but was a violation of the spirit of the federal compact, although "not absolutely unconstitutional." The remonstrance closed by expressing a fear that the passage of the bill might lead to division among the people of the United States,—a possibility which South Carolina contemplated with horror. There were two small parties which did not subscribe in any way to this remonstrance. One was the party of protectionists, never conspicuous and never of large proportions, although boasting several members of unusual ability; the other was the party, now showing signs of increasing strength, which thought it saw in the tariff bill a malicious attack upon the rights of the South, and which regarded a dissolution of the Union as a thing not altogether undesirable, if matters were arranged contrary to the will of the state.

That the remonstrance did not reflect the constitutional views of the majority was indicated by the joint resolutions of the legislature the following year, after the tariff bill had become a law, wherein it was declared absolutely that such legislation was an unconstitutional exercise of power on the part of Congress. The bill had not, however, passed Congress until it had undergone considerable modification, and many in South Carolina who had opposed the bill accepted the law, as not entirely obnoxious to them. Everything that could be done to prevent its passage had been done; it had nevertheless become a law, and the legislature had solemnly declared its disapproval. A state of quiescence followed and no attempt was made at actual resistance to the law. If the friends of the protective principle had rested satisfied with what they had gained, perhaps the history of nullification need never have been written. But the quiescence was sullen, and there were signs that if it were disturbed, it would give place to a temper more dangerous than had yet been shown.

The disturbance came in the shape of the woollens bill which was introduced in Congress in 1827, and the dangerous state of

feeling in South Carolina became evident at once. On the 2d of July of that year a meeting was held at Columbia, presided over by Governor Taylor. The governor was not an extreme man, but the resolutions which were adopted and the principal speech that was made came from Dr. Cooper, a strong advocate of state sovereignty. He was an Englishman, who had come to America some years before this and had been appointed president of the South Carolina College. The respect for his scholarship extended far beyond the limits of his state, and especially had his arguments against a protective tariff obtained a wide circulation, one pamphlet in particular having been reprinted for general distribution by the New York *Evening Post*. His opposition had hitherto been based upon economic and constitutional grounds; he now gave utterance to sentiments of a more inflammatory character. The resolutions set forth at length the economic arguments against the protective principle, denied the right of Congress to pass taxation laws which fostered one branch of industry at the expense of another, and declared, further, that such proceedings were calculated to "bring on the dangerous inquiry," in what matter the Southern states were "benefited by the Union." Cooper's speech was more exhaustive economically and more radical constitutionally than the resolutions themselves.

I have said [he cried] that we shall ere long be compelled to calculate the value of our Union, and to inquire of what use to us is this most unequal alliance. . . . Is it worth our while to continue this Union of states, where the North demands to be our masters and we are required to be their tributaries? . . . The question, however, is fast approaching to the alternative of submission or separation.

The resolutions were transmitted to the legislatures of the other Southern states and laid before the legislature of South Carolina, but their disunion suggestions met with no official response.

Early in 1828 the woollens bill became a law. The wild rage of its opponents in South Carolina found a fit expression, about three weeks after its promulgation, in the famous address of the citizens of the Colleton district. Coming after the Columbia

resolutions and being of a more violent tone, it marks a distinct stage in the advance toward nullification. The Columbia resolutions hinted at the desirability of secession; the Colleton address boldly advocated resistance to the law.

According to our humble conception [it said], the constitutional grounds upon which our fathers resisted the pretensions of the British crown are weak and trivial, when compared with those upon which we now stand;

and calling upon the memory of the men of the Revolution, and in their name, it excitedly urged immediate and forcible action. The address further requested Governor Taylor to call a special session of the legislature, and proposed a public dinner to Mr. McDuffie, the representative of the Colleton district in Congress. The governor refused to call a special session, saying that there was not sufficient unanimity of desire for it among the people, and that the legislature about to be elected, coming, as it would, fresh from the people, with the tariff as the issue before them, would be better able than the old legislature to interpret the popular will. The dinner to Mr. McDuffie, however, came off according to the programme, and his speech was extremely violent in tone. A public meeting in Baltimore, held shortly afterwards, declared both this speech and the Colleton address "hostile to the constitution, treasonable in their spirit and tending to rebellion." The Union party of South Carolina not only indorsed this opinion, but accused the states-rights party of a desire to destroy the Union and to raise a monarchy upon the ruins.

The antagonism between the two parties was becoming intenser every day. Their difference was no ordinary difference. Each regarded the other as traitorous. The Carolinian was a man of intense convictions and impatient of opposition, and while it is doubtless true that the party which afterward became known as the nullifiers was the more violent and intolerant of the two, the Unionists, on their side, were fully prepared to support their opinions at all hazards.¹ On the 4th of August,

¹ An indication of the prevalent feeling may be found in the public performance at Beaufort of the "Disunion Drama," and in the adoption by the states-rights party of resolutions designed to compel the press "to speak the language of the South."

at Columbia, a public meeting promulgated an anti-tariff address, which advocated non-consumption of dutiable articles. The opening clause, expressing fidelity to the Union, was carried by a majority of two votes only, and Governor Taylor, Unionist as he was, characterized the tariff law as a "deliberate, palpable and dangerous exercise of other powers not granted by the compact." David R. Williams, who had at one time been governor of the state, and whom we find subsequently spoken of as a "staunch nullifier," headed the more moderate faction of the states-rights party, and endeavored to arouse in them some idea of the dangers they were rushing into.

We were not sparing of our censures [he wrote] when New England meditated resistance to the embargo. . . . There was not a man among us who did not pronounce the Hartford Convention a traitorous association ; indisputably it becomes us to look well to it, that we do not tread in the very footsteps which we have denounced with so much bitterness.

He deprecated any hasty action by the legislature and pointed out the extreme folly of forcible resistance. The Unionists boldly charged that during the last session of Congress, certain Southern members, including representatives of South Carolina, had planned in Washington a conspiracy for the purpose of dissolving the Union. The necessity for strenuous opposition was keenly felt by the Unionists, and accordingly in Charleston, the centre of their party, a "people's union" ticket was put in the field, with an address strongly espousing the principles of union and peace. This address, dignified and patriotic in tone, was signed by Thomas Lowndes, S. Magwood, James Lamb, Richard Cunningham, William Lance, B. F. Dunkin, William Newton, Benjamin F. Hunt, J. Harleston Read, Elias Horry, Theodore Gaillard Hunt, Dr. J. W. Schmidt, Alexander Black, William Aiken, Hugh S. Legaré and L. H. Kennedy. These, with several others, may be considered as the leaders of the Union party in Charleston. They organized their followers and advocated their views often at the risk of personal violence to themselves. All of them were men of influence and standing, and several of brilliancy and genius.

Nevertheless, as matters now stood, the advantage was with the states-rights party, because it was the more united of the two. It hesitated upon the brink of nullification. Some of its members were in favor of immediate resistance, others favored delay, that opportunity might be allowed Congress for more favorable action. This was the only important point of difference in its ranks. The Union party, on the other hand, was less closely bound together. The protectionist faction could not be brought to follow the free-trade faction; they differed too radically. It is true, the protectionists were not numerous, but their numbers were not contemptible, and their entire cooperation was necessary, if the purposes of the nullifiers were to be thwarted. Again, there were material differences among the Unionists on the constitutional question, some believing a protective tariff absolutely unconstitutional, others holding it a violation merely of the spirit of the constitution, and others maintaining its entire constitutionality. The states-rights party were unwavering in their hatred of the tariff, their belief in its utter unconstitutionality and their determination to oppose it. They were a distinct party. Their opponents were, properly speaking, a mere opposition.

Matters were in a state which boded no good, when the legislature met for the session of 1828-29. Mr. Legaré introduced in the House of Representatives resolutions which assumed the unconstitutionality of protective duties and declared the tariff of 1828 unjust and oppressive, but declared that the people of the state were not prepared to come into open and violent collision with their fellow-citizens before time was given for further argument upon the subject, or until every effort to obtain redress through the instrumentality of Congress had failed. He proposed that a solemn protest against the principles of the tariff should be recorded in the journals of Congress at Washington, but that the state convention, which was now being urged by the states-rights party, should not be called, and that no acts to nullify the laws of the United States should be passed. In the state Senate, Mr. Grimke, a powerful Unionist, introduced resolutions declaring the tariff law of 1828 not a

“palpable breach of the constitution”; but reciting that since the state had declared the act unconstitutional, as a “misconstruction or abuse of power,” she owed it to her sense of dignity to follow the example set in 1798, by applying to her sister states to unite with her in asking Congress for a “declaratory or restrictive” amendment. The resolutions further declared that no measures ought to be taken which were based upon her sovereign rights. Both sets of resolutions failed. The House finally voted that an appeal be made to the other states for assistance in forcing a repeal of the tariff laws, and, if they were not repealed, that measures be devised for arresting the evil, according to the Kentucky Resolutions of 1798; and the Senate resolved that the tariff laws should be resisted, and that other states should be invited to co-operate in measures for that purpose. The new governor, Miller, in his inaugural address, said: “In swearing to support the constitution of the United States, I do not regard myself as acknowledging allegiance to an unconstitutional act of Congress.”

It was charged by the opposition, that certain disappointed and ambitious men were sowing the seeds of disunion with a view to the erection of a distinct sovereignty, which might satisfy the longing for power and dignities which the Union failed to afford them. Unquestionably, such an idea was far from the thoughts of Calhoun; but the conduct and the utterances of James Hamilton, Jr., who was soon to become governor, of McDuffie and Hayne, of Pinckney, the editor of the *Mercury*, the organ of the nullifiers, of Barnwell Smith, one of their favorite orators, and of others of similar stamp, were certainly of a character to confirm the suspicion.

The stars and garters of nobility [said the Charleston *City Gazette*] are glittering in the perspective. The bond of our Union is to be dissolved, to gratify the pride, vanity and deep-seated ambition of a few disappointed individuals.

The members of the Union party were scattered pretty evenly over the whole state, and were of respectable numbers nearly everywhere. Greenville, in the mountainous district near the

North Carolina border, was conspicuous as a loyal community. The city of Charleston, however, was the principal stronghold of the Union party. It was there that the Lowndeses lived, and Pringle and Grimke and Pettigru and the rest of the state leaders, and there William Drayton, the eloquent member of Congress, belonged. A speech of the last-mentioned gentleman at a dinner in Charleston, in July, 1830, is especially noteworthy, as the utterance of a certain form of political belief which had many adherents then and more afterwards. Nullification had now become a regular political issue. Drayton declared that he could not see any distinction between the nullification by a state of a law of Congress and a separation of that state from the Union. He conceded the right of a state to secede, but he thought it absurd for a state to belong to the Union and not be bound by federal laws, and he thought South Carolina would suffer more by separation than by enduring the law she thought so inimical to her interests. Of a more positive tone was the letter of another Charlestonian, Judge Johnson, of the Supreme Court of the United States, declining an invitation to speak at a dinner at Columbia. He thought "that Carolina had not only not been injured, but really benefited to many thousands by the tariff," and that no state in the Union was more deeply interested in maintaining its principles; that nullification was folly, and the peaceable course projected under it all a "silly and wicked delusion," growing out of "a deliberate conspiracy against the Union," which had been steadily working for six years, and that the proposed convention was "the grand end and aim and agent of that conspiracy."

In September of 1830 the Unionists in Charleston elected their candidate for intendant, or mayor, and their ticket was generally successful. The legislative session of the following winter was attended with great excitement. The states-rights party elected James Hamilton, Jr., governor, but their proposition for a state convention failed to get the necessary two-thirds vote in its favor. There never was any doubt that the convention, if called, would result, as it subsequently did, in the passage of a nullifying ordinance. This was fully recognized by

the anti-nullifiers, and they took the ground that the call of a convention, as a preparatory and preliminary measure for carrying into effect a nullification of the laws of the United States, would be "revolutionary and unconstitutional."

Early in 1831, the states-rights ball was held in Charleston. Beaufort had had its "Disunion Drama," disunion dinners had been eaten in almost every hamlet in the state; it was only proper, under the circumstances, that the nullifiers should have a dance. Though the incident was the subject of flippant comment,¹ yet the fact of a states-rights ball was pregnant with meaning. Any one who has lived in the South at a time of great political excitement is painfully aware how blended its politics and society become. The people feel strongly and make little allowance for difference of opinion. Their political opponents are their enemies, and the two parties cannot make merry together. A large ball thus partakes of the nature of a political demonstration. The parties in South Carolina were arrayed against one another publicly and privately.

The theory of nullification, as set forth by Calhoun, even now, after it has received the benefit of careful study and able expounding by historians, is not clear. He always avowed a loyalty to the Union, but the arguments by which he sought to demonstrate that nullification was compatible with the existence of the Union, and indeed a guarantee of its perpetuity, did not occasion much solicitude to the majority of his party. But no one at the North understood the fallacy of his reasoning or the real end and aim of his party more clearly than did the Union men of his state. They reasoned simply. Said the Camden, S. C., *Gazette*:

We know of only two ways, under our government, to get rid of obnoxious legislation. We must convince a majority of the nation that a given enactment is wrong and have it repealed in the form prescribed by the constitution, or resist it extra-constitutionally by the sword. . . .

¹ "Everything," said the *National Intelligencer*, in its account of the affair, "was dramatic and poetical and emblematic. . . . We trust that there will be an *anti*-nullification ball, and that the whole dispute will be carried on, for the future, by cotillions, waltzes and gallopades, by 'woaltas high and swift corantos.' The parties should exchange — invitations."

But this everlasting cant of devotion to the Union, accompanied by a recommendation to do those acts that must necessarily destroy it, is beyond patient endurance from a people not absolutely confined in their own mad-houses.

The general belief of the larger portion of the Unionists was well set forth at a loyal meeting in the disloyal Colleton district. The tariff act of 1828, they thought, was "unequal and unjust" and unconstitutional, and, while they opposed it, it was

Resolved, That we do not consider the right of a state to "nullify," or forcibly arrest and make void a law of Congress, as a constitutional right, but as a right of sovereignty paramount to the constitution; that although such a right might be exercised by a state in its sovereign capacity, after it shall have recalled to itself those powers which it has delegated to the federal government and thus have made itself (what no state now is) a perfect sovereign and independent nation, yet such a power evidently cannot be rightfully exercised, so long as a state continues a member of the Union and avails itself of its laws.

The year closed less promisingly than it had opened. A nullifier was elected intendant of Charleston, and the states-rights party were more successful than they had ever been before. That they were thoroughly in earnest and meant to do all that they had threatened, became very evident. In August, 1831, in Beaufort, they had requested that the governor should issue a proclamation, setting aside a day for fasting, humiliation and prayer to God for the removal of the national oppression under which they suffered,—a request which the governor promised to comply with. In the latter part of the year the test case of the constitutionality of the tariff was tried. Two members of the Charleston bar, E. Holmes and Alexander Mazyek, imported through a mercantile house a bale of blue plains. For the payment of the duty on the bale they gave three several bonds, and payment being refused, suit was brought by the United States against the bonds. Frost, the former United States district attorney, had refused to bring the suit, had been promptly removed by President Jackson and had been much feasted by the states-rights party. The case came up before Judge Lee in September, in the United States district court, and the new

district attorney, Gilchrist, was assisted by Pettigru. Holmes himself, assisted by McDuffie, argued for the defendants. The test question was, whether the court would receive evidence other than such as related to the mere execution of the bonds of the defendants. The court's answer was in the negative. The effect of this decision was to deny that the unconstitutional character of the tariff act of 1828 could be carried before a jury in the federal court. To carry it before a South Carolina jury was the object sought, and the verdict of such a jury, if it could have been obtained, would probably have been satisfactory to the adversaries of the law. The scheme was an ingenious one, and its failure was used as an additional argument for immediate nullification.¹

With the exception of the year when Fort Sumter was fired upon, there never was a time in the history of South Carolina more fraught with exciting events than 1832. The palmetto cockade, the emblem of the nullifiers, might be met with everywhere, and the number of its wearers was increasing. For the first time it began to be evident that the efforts of the Unionists to stay the tide which was rushing madly towards nullification would be unavailing; nevertheless they stood their ground, determined never to give up the fight as long as a vestige of hope remained to them. In the heat of the contest they accused their opponents of seeking aid from England. "Fellow-citizens," says the pamphlet containing the proceedings of a meeting in the Chester district early in 1832,

your country is in danger and the subject need be no longer disguised. It is apparent that there are men in the midst of us who are urging the state into a hostile contest with our own government, and who are looking to *England* for assistance to rescue them from the dilemma consequent upon such a contest.

The *Alabama Gazette* further charged that an emissary of the states-rights party had proceeded to England, to arrange for

¹ The last record found of this celebrated "bond case" shows that the United States, being unable to collect its money, levied upon a house belonging to Holmes and sold it at auction to a states-rights man, who refused to comply with the terms of sale. It was again put up for sale, and not a single bid for it could be obtained.

military assistance as soon as the "nation of South Carolina" should throw herself upon her sovereignty; and it was very generally believed that the *Columbia Telescope*, one of the chief organs of the nullifiers, was under the influence of certain turbulent Englishmen. The election in Charleston this year was exciting and riotous, and fraudulent practices were notoriously resorted to by both parties. Pinckney, the candidate of the nullifiers, was again elected intendant.

In July, 1832, a further tariff bill had been passed by Congress, and in September the Unionists held a convention at Columbia. The leading spirit of the meeting was Pettigru, and the address to the people of the state was drawn up by him. At a time of intense excitement, when both parties were accusing each other of crimes which neither was so blind as to contemplate committing, this address, nevertheless, held a language temperate and reasonable. No argument on record at the time, and few, if any, of those which have been made since, have contained a more masterly refutation of the doctrine of nullification. The address began by declaring that the people of the state were substantially united in their opposition to the tariff law, but differed only as to the best means to be employed to accomplish its repeal. Nullification, as a peaceful remedy, must be a mere suit at law, and a weak and inefficient measure. As a forcible interposition of the sovereign power of the state, it must be an infraction of the constitution and the beginning of a revolution. The object of the constitution was to preserve and protect the union of the states, and, if a state could nullify an act of Congress, the federal government must share the fate of the old Confederation. It was monstrous to suppose that the framers of the constitution did not invest the general government with full power to execute its own laws. A dissolution of the Union was one of the least evils which would result from nullification. A peaceable secession from the Union might *possibly* take place, but nullification *must* produce a collision between the authorities of the state and those of the Union. Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, Alabama and Mississippi were equally concerned with South Carolina in a repeal of the obnox-

ious law. Therefore, it was proposed that there be a convention of these states, to deliberate upon measures for redress. There was every argument in favor of such a convention; few could be alleged against it. The same blow which would destroy the Union would level to the ground the defences of liberty.

Such was the sense of the address, and resolutions embodying its salient features were immediately adopted. Its effect was such as to warrant the Unionists in feeling some encouragement, but the state had now reached a stage verging upon civil war between its parties. "Would it not be well to lay in provisions for a siege?" wrote a nullification lady in the country to her husband in the legislature;

our castle will be well filled in case of an attack. I have offered rooms to all our nearest friends. I must furnish rice and we are to get beef from Woodstock. . . . It is proposed to have some of our windows with iron bars. . . . Stand by your country and I will never desert you.

And on the other side, the Greenville *Mountaineer* declared that the people of that section were ready to march at a moment's warning in defence of the authority of the national government.

In August, 1832, Drayton had issued an address to the people of Charleston, entreating them to submit to the laws of the Union, and the remarkable address of Thomas Grimke came just after the nullification ordinance had passed the convention. To us who read it now it has a prophetic ring.

The ordinance passed by your convention at Columbia a few days since is the grave, not the bridal chamber of liberty. . . . It will be regarded even in the South Carolina of future years with grief and mortification. . . . Be not deceived. The governor has applied for a garrison of two thousand men for Charleston and for an additional force of ten thousand men, in direct violation of the constitution of the Union which still binds you and which prohibits a state from "keeping troops or ships of war in time of peace." . . . The world may be called upon to gaze on the blockade of your coast, on the alternate execution of traitors to the state and traitors to the Union, on the battle-field of brothers and the conflagration of your towns; *but to that world it will be the history of a rebellious province, not of an independent nation!*

It is not within the scope of this paper to discuss the ordinance of nullification or the laws passed to carry it into effect. These are matters of common history. A fact, however, that historians have failed to lay any stress upon, and that nevertheless deserves some notice, is the holding of a state convention of the Union party of South Carolina immediately after the nullification convention had completed its work. It was the last important action of that party in the state. Randell Hunt, who presented the first resolutions, epitomized the views of the convention and the question it should consider in three sentences :

That the Union party acknowledges no allegiance to any government except that of the United States.

That in referring this resolution to the general committee they be instructed to inquire whether it is not expedient to give a military organization to the Union party throughout the state.

Whether it will not be necessary to call in the assistance of the general government for maintaining the laws of the United States against the arbitrary violence which is threatened by the late convention.

The resolutions which were adopted declared that the ordinance of nullification violated the constitution of the United States and had virtually destroyed the Union, since by preventing the general government from enforcing its laws within the boundaries of the state, it made the state a sovereignty paramount to the United States. They denounced the provisions of the ordinance as tyrannical and oppressive, and the test oath as especially incompatible with civil liberty, in that it disfranchised nearly half the citizens of the state. They pointed scornfully to the project of a standing army in the state. Such an army must necessarily be inadequate to protect the nullification party from the coercive power of the United States ; its only object, therefore, must be to tyrannize over Carolina Unionists. They concluded by declaring the continued opposition of the signers to the tariff, and their determination to protect themselves against intolerable oppression. The resolutions were signed by all the members of the convention, about one hundred and eighty in number.

In point of fact, the Unionists were not disposed to favor any

compromise measures, and looked rather with disfavor upon Mr. Clay's bill, as a measure which was being forced upon the country. Congress, they thought, ought not to modify the tariff until the nullification ordinance had been repealed. But the greater force was with the nullifiers, and the number of their opponents was dwindling. Caught by the enthusiasm and fighting spirit of their neighbors, some of the Unionists joined the nullification military companies that were being organized, and others, seeing the hopelessness of the struggle against a superior force, in sorrow and disgust shook the dust of South Carolina from their feet, preferring to begin life over again in other parts of the South, less charged with sentiments that they believed to be treasonable. The intentions of the dominant party could not be mistaken. Hamilton, the president of the nullification convention, declared that the policy of his party was to allow Congress time to modify the tariff; but if the President of the United States should be given power to coerce South Carolina, he would immediately reassemble the convention and submit to it the question of secession. If peaceable secession should be denied, he was ready to perish in the attempt to secede by force.

Whether, in the light of subsequent events, the compromise tariff bill of Henry Clay was wise or unwise, is not to be considered here; but there can be no question of the correctness of Mr. Justice Lamar's assertion, that its passage "averted the storm and substituted peace for intestine strife." The nullification party could afford to be magnanimous, for it had really won the fight. It had not got all that it had demanded, but it had got more than it had a right to expect. And the Unionist party, crushed and helpless, was only too anxious to bury all feuds. It never was an active force in the state again, but the bold spirit which had actuated its members was manifested later, when the struggle for state sovereignty was more widespread; and some of the most intrepid Union men of the South in the civil war were those who had fled from South Carolina years before, when the nullification party had triumphed.

GAILLARD HUNT.